

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 050350Z APR 74

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1612

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 574

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11562

TAGS: PFOR, CB, CH

SUBJECT: SIHANOUK COMMENTS ON RETIREMENT FROM POLITICAL LIFE

REF: HONG KONG 3817 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING MAJOR RECEPTION FOR KHIEU SAMPHAN AT GREAT HALL OF PEOPLE APRIL 3 (REFTEL), SIHANOUK HOSTED EVENING GATHERING AT HIS RESIDENCE FOR SELECTED MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND PRESS. SIHANOUK AND KHIEU SAMPHAN WERE SEATED SIDE BY SIDE ON SOFA FACING DIP CORPS ARRAYED ON STRAIGHT CHAIRS. ACCORDING TO JOURNALISTS WHO ATTENDED, BOTH SIHANOUK AND KHIEU SAMPHAN MADE A GREAT SHOW OF MUTUAL AFFECTION.

2. THE PRINCE TREATED THE GROUP TO A SPEECH WHICH WAS
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VINTAGE SIHANOUK. HE SAID HE HOPED TO GET OUT OF POLITICS

AND SERVE AS PUBLICS RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVE FOR GRUNK. NOTING THAT ROYALTY WHO ENGAGE IN POLITICS OFTEN LOSE THEIR HEADS, SIHANOUK LOOKED AT SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN FRONT ROW, MADE THROAT CUTTING GESTURE, AND SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO MEET SAME FATE AS ROMANOV. HE WANTED, HE SAID, TO BE LIKE QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND CONCERN HIMSELF WITH DOGS AND CAMERAS. HE ALSO OFFERED TO TRAVEL TO THE UN IN HIS PR CAPACITY WHERE HE WOULD "ATTACK THE U.S., THE UK, REACTIONARIES AND ZIONISTS." SIHANOUK OFFERED THE OPINION THAT SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS TOO MANY CORRUPT GOVERNMENTS, AND THAT GRUNK WAS ONE OF A VERY FEW HONEST ONES. HE DESCRIBED KHIEU SAMPHAN AS A GOOD KHMER.

3. LOCAL OBSERVERS VIEWED SIHANOUK SOIREE AS A SOP TO THE PRINCE WHO HAS RATED A POOR THIRD IN PEKING ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING THE KHIEU SAMPHAN VISIT. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION HERE IS THAT SIHANOUK HAS SLIPPED RATHER BADLY WITH THE CHINESE AND THAT PRC MAY BE RETHINKING ITS STRATEGY TOWARD CAMBODIAN SITUATION, ALTHOUGH DIRECTION OF THAT RETHINKING IS STILL FAR FROM CLEAR. (IN THIS LAST RESPECT, WE HAVE HEARD SECONDHAND FROM FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES HERE THAT THEY EXPECT SIHANOUK TO BE ON THE RIVIERA IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.)

4. POLES TELL US THAT KHIEU SAMPHAN WILL PROCEED FROM HERE TO PYONGYANG AND THEN ON TO MOSCOW AND PARIS. THEY SPECULATE HE WILL BE DISCUSSING AID ARRANGEMENTS IN PYONGYANG AND MOSCOW AND MAY EVEN CONTACT LON NOL ELEMENTS IN PARIS. BRUCE

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